

2023 December Block Supply List and Directions Birch Branches/Bamboo Shoots/Sugar Cane



****You will be making 9 blocks total; measuring 15 ½" x 15 ½" unfinished, 15" finished.**

Supplies

** 9 – 16" x 14" base blocks of the same solid color. This is the background color that you signed up for and it is roughly 2 yards of fabric.

You may be more comfortable cutting your base blocks slightly larger to start off with (more below).

**A variety of scraps in different widths and colors to make the birch branches.

Blocks

If you have never done a wonky or improv block, you will probably be more comfortable cutting your base blocks a bit larger to ensure enough fabric for seam allowances and trimming. There is a minute learning curve if you are new to this, but after a couple blocks, you will be a pro. If you are concerned, start out with a 17" x 15" block for the first one. This will require a small amount of extra background fabric.



Strips

Sort through your scraps to select colors that are pleasing to you. You can coordinate a bit if you want, but completely scrappy is best; as is a variety of widths. Start sewing scraps together. Straight lines are not important, as this will give character to your branches. Iron as you go along and iron the seams open to reduce bulk. When your scrap strip becomes about 18 inches long, it's time to trim up the sides. You may be able to get more than one branch out of the strip of scraps depending on how wide it is.

****You will want three different size (width) branches in each block. Cut your scrap strips at any of these widths, 1", 1 ¼", 1 ½", 1 ¾", 2", 2 ¼", 2 ½" and 3", by 18" in length so you have a variety.**

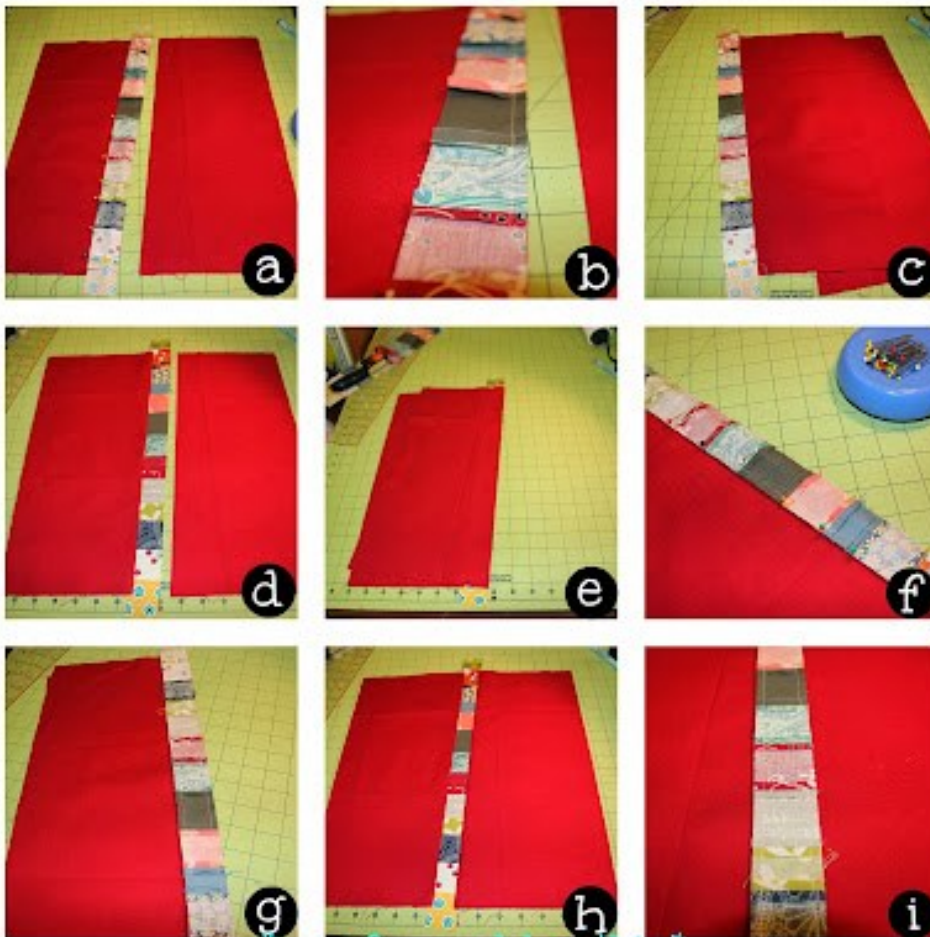
You will need a total of 27 – 18" strips.

It is best to only use 1 – 1" strip in a block so you don't run into trouble with not having enough width when you trim up your block. I found that I was comfortable with a 1 ½ inch strip as my smallest strip width. Also, I liked the look with the amount of background fabric.

Attaching Branches to the Base Block



1. Pick three 18 inch scrap strips for your block. Lay out your base block. The shorter side is the top (14 inches) and bottom measurement; you are adding width with the strips. Starting centrally, determine where you will place the first strip and lay it on your base block.
2. Lay your ruler down the center of your strip and carefully slide your strip out from under the ruler without moving the base block. Make a single cut.
3. Sew the strip to both sides of the base block with right sides together, scrap strip on top so you can hold down the seam allowance. Pay close attention to the placement of the base block pieces. You can pin if you like. Press seams toward the solid block.
4. Continue with the same steps and add a strip on each side of the first strip. Be careful that your scrap strip falls on the top and bottom of the base block and not on the sides. There has to be enough base block on each side of the outer scrap strips for trimming up.
5. Trim the blocks to 15 ½" x 15 ½"



Things will be a bit stretchy as you cut and sew. Handle with care as you move to and from the sewing machine and iron. Iron by lifting your iron up and placing down rather than sliding the iron around. This will cut down on stretching.

With that being said, the strips and the block are very forgiving.

Enjoy this project. For questions contact Konnie Glaze.

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<https://areformedheathn.blogspot.com/2013/12/tipsy-tutorials-random-bamboo.html#.Y3Kzv3bMLb3>

Heather H. Karr, A Reformed Heath'n, also credits Crazy Mom Quilts for the idea: <https://crazymomquilts.blogspot.com/>